Mr. Nat Hentoff
c/o Oped Page, the Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, DC 20071

8/14/93

Dear Mr. Hentoff,

Justified and powerful as your criticism of Joe McGinniss and S&S is (Post 8/14/93) and as was Jonathan Yardley's before you, I think you have both missed an even greater scandal - the ugliness of the commercialization and exploitation of the great national tragedy of the JFK assassination of which as it has for 30 years the book-publishing industry has by and large deceived and misled the people.

S & S had another bit of worse than trash out for reviews, Bob Callahan's "Who Shot JFK?" The cover blurb is "A Guide to the Major Conspiracy Theories." That is but the beginning of the cheap and nasty lies in a book that is shot full of ignorant and careless errors. And if it were not it would still be worse than trash. I've just skimmed it but if you want a professorial opinion, Dr. David Wrone, University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point (home address 1518 Blackberry Lane) has gone over it.

(I digress for an illustration of the ignorance and carelessness that typify this not unusual publisher greed on the subject. On page 42, which I just noticed, it has the Late Sylvia Meagher as "a New York City public health administrator" when in fact she was a WHO editor, and in the ~~very first~~ same sentence says that "Abraham Zapruder's testimony did not include his stated belief that the shots came from behind him..." He did so testify.

That so-called "chapter" begins saying that the Warren Report was "published" September 24, 1964." Wrong! It was three days later. From just skimming I know of many, many more serious factual, errors all of which have been public knowledge for a long time. The theories it more or less skips over all are the oldest and while I believe all the theories presented as fact are unproven and mislead and deceive, all the newer ones and those current in the earliest day that were more significant are entirely missing. There cannot have been any peer review or even the intent of one because the record is that the publishers can get away with anything.

There is a real problem for the country when on major issues the book publishers, among others, opt for safety from official criticism and for greed. Of their less than complete listing of the coming assassination books in PW dated 4/3, I can fault them all in varying degrees and all, again in varying degrees, will perpetuate the industry-wide abdication of any ~~sense~~ sense of responsibilty and its greed for the dirtiest kind of money.

I am astounded at the silence that greeted Kent Carroll's description of his coming book by one of the nuttiest (certifiable) of the nuts who invent these conspiracy theories. Carroll says it will say of the critics other than the one who made so much dirty money for him that we "have for one reason or another, put out a lot of disinformation, <u>furthering the conspiracy</u>." My emphasis.

That author, who can have at most a single peer in "disinformation," according own publisher, is charging the others as accessories after the fact. That is a very serious criminal offense.

Aside from the fact that Carroll & Graf have to know that their author is sick the head, how can all reviewers have not taken note of this incredible accusation w cannot be proven, not even in Livingstone's fictions, of which I had a large file, at the least ask questions? Including is there any meaningful recourse for those sc and what responsibility does a publisher have when he has reason to believe the auth publishes is not rational?

These are the two extremes, S &S and C & G. In between is a frightful mishmash of reprints and some openly fraudulent.

"Erasing the boundary between fact and fiction" on what gets to the guts of r tative society, the assassination of a President, is what the publishing industry l had done and is exceeding its deplorable past with all the tainted money that can c from the awful, utterly irresponsible stuff typified by those S & S commercializati

I hope that at long last reviewers and columnists will learn the realities for ves and inform the people.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg

cc Jonathan Yardley

Please excuse my typing. It can't be any better. I'm 80 and unwell